

SENATE BILL 739

By Tate

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 36 and Title 37, relative to establishing the office of noncustodial parent advocacy pilot project.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 36, Chapter 6, Part 4, is amended by adding the following language as a new, appropriately numbered section:

(a) Subject to subsection (e), the administrative office of the courts (AOC) shall establish and implement the office of noncustodial parent advocacy pilot project. The pilot project shall be implemented in all juvenile courts and all courts exercising juvenile court jurisdiction in at least one (1) county within each of the state's three (3) grand divisions. The office of noncustodial parent advocacy shall provide assistance to unwed noncustodial parents in obtaining visitation rights to their children.

(b) The AOC shall promulgate such rules as may be necessary to implement the office in an efficient and effective manner. Such rules shall include, but shall not be limited to, policies and procedures to:

(1) Provide assistance to unwed noncustodial parents in obtaining visitation rights to their children;

(2) Provide notice to all unwed parents of the availability of the office of parent advocacy;

(3) Monitor parents who use the office of noncustodial parent advocacy to evaluate the efficiency of the office and the continued needs of unwed noncustodial parents in obtaining visitation rights to their children;

(4) Monitor the consistency of custody and visitation due to assistance from the office of noncustodial parent advocacy; and

(5) Provide recommendations for improving visitation rights of unwed noncustodial parents, including but not limited to, the need for noncustodial parent advocacy offices throughout the state.

(c) On or before February 15, 2014, and on or before February 15 of each successive year thereafter, the AOC shall report to the judiciary committee of the senate and the civil justice committee of the house of representatives the findings concerning the efficiency and effectiveness of the pilot project.

(d) The pilot project shall remain in effect until July 1, 2015.

(e)

(1) Any local government desiring to participate in the pilot project shall provide sufficient nonstate funding for such project.

(2) The AOC shall only develop and implement a pilot project if sufficient funding is provided by at least one (1) local government in each grand division for the duration of the pilot project. Such commitment shall be evinced through passage of a resolution or ordinance detailing the funding and funding sources for the project. A certified copy of the adopting resolution or ordinance shall be furnished by the local government to the AOC.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2013, the public welfare requiring it.